

The Law on Telecommunications, adopted in October 2003, is the primary legal act specifying the regulations concerning the telecommunications sector. The Act targets liberalizing the telecommunications services, promoting the market economy principles therefore preventing unfair competition. The main principle is for equal treatment of the telecom operators.

Under the Act, the definition of telecommunications is the following: transfer, transmission or acceptance of all kinds of signs, signals, written words, pictures, sounds or information by the means of a conductor, radio waves, optical or other electromagnetic surroundings.

The telecommunication activity is carrying out telecommunications through telecommunication networks an/or through providing telecommunication services.

The telecommunication operators provide telecommunication services on the grounds of licensing or free.

According to the legislation "license" is considered to be the permission for utilizing the radio frequency spectrum, for activities on performing telecommunication services as well as for radio and television activities.

The activities on performing telecommunication services will be realized after licensing with individual licenses, general license or free.

The radio and television activities are performed only after individual licensing is given.

The individual licenses are personal. They can be issued without competition or tender, when their object is an unlimited resource. The individual license may be issued for a period of up to 20 years. This term can be extended with no limitations.

The general license shall be promulgated in the State Gazette. Everyone may perform telecommunications activities under a general license after registering at the Commission for Regulation of Communications.

The Government approves issuing licenses for establishment of telecommunication networks and delivery of public telecommunication services by using the radio frequency spectrum. The initial proposal comes from the Commission for Regulation of Communications.

The Council of Ministers is expected to approve a National Plan for Assignment of Radio Frequencies upon a proposal made by the Council on the National Radio Frequency Spectrum.

The State Commission on Telecommunications permits the following:

- Import of transmission radio facilities for civil purposes

- Production and/or distribution of transmission radio facilities for civil purposes on Bulgarian territory
- Legal competence to radio operators - professionals and amateurs

Telecommunications services and equipment is one of the best prospects sector for U.S. companies. U.S. exporters should contact the U.S. Commercial Service office in Sofia for additional customized market research, trade leads or meetings with appropriate local contacts.